

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 5 October 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
5 OCTOBER 1968

1. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

The Soviets have considerably tightened the reins on Czechoslovakia as a result of the summit talks concluded yesterday. They now seem determined to insist on Czechoslovak compliance with the Moscow agreement of August. Conservative, pro-Soviet personalities appear certain to enter the Prague government, Dubcek's days as party chief are numbered, and a Soviet garrison will remain in Czechoslovakia for the indefinite future.

The communiqué states that Prague "will reinforce the party and state organs with men firmly adhering to positions of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism." The two sides will consider and sign a treaty on the "temporary" stationing of Soviet troops, probably 100,000 strong.

The concessions made to Moscow are bound to alienate President Svoboda, thus destroying the unified Prague leadership. They also will erode Dubcek's domestic support, probably greasing the way for his replacement by Slovak party secretary Husak.

2. Soviet Union

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3. Soviet Union

The major conclusions of NIE 11-8-68, Soviet Strategic Attack Forces, are given at Annex.

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4. European Community - Members of the European Community
United Kingdom are showing a new willingness to move
ahead on cooperation with Britain even
without France. Belgian Foreign Minister Harmel has announced a Benelux plan
for using the framework of the Western
European Union for cooperation in areas 50X1
not covered by the Community treaties.

5. Nigeria

The French-facilitated airlift of weapons to Biafra continues to grow. A ten-plane shuttle under French supervision is making seven or eight flights a night into Biafra from Gabon carrying relief supplies and French-made arms. Our defense attaché in the Ivory Coast has seen French Air Force transports and other French planes with military cargoes which appear to be destined for the Biafrans. This is probably why the Biafrans are still in the fight.

6. Chile

High school students made a rock-throwing attack on the US consulate in Santiago yesterday and were joined by some well-known Communist adults. The demonstration arose out of mixed motives--to protest alleged US involvement in the Peruvian coup and to express sympathy with student demonstrations in Mexico and Uruguay.

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7. United Kingdom -
Rhodesia

At British initiative, there will be another meeting between Wilson and Ian Smith aboard a British naval vessel, beginning about 9 October. No preliminary progress has been made on the main points at issue on the Rhodesian question. Wilson no doubt calculates that if the talks get nowhere, he can make sure that they break down on grounds politically favorable to London.

8. Israel

The Jerusalem Post says that Prime Minister Eshkol made a speech yesterday in which he declared that Israel had the know-how to make atom bombs. He said, according to the paper, that it was a long way from this to producing nuclear weapons. The Post, which often reflects government thinking, commented on this statement by saying that the fate of Czechoslovakia and Biafra strengthened Israeli resolve to have a nuclear deterrent of its own. Such frankness is unprecedented in the Israeli press.

9. Mexico

There is a general feeling of insecurity in Mexico City following the extreme violence of 2 October. The capital is rife with rumors of revolution and military takeover, and the government expects a major act of sabotage before the opening of the Olympics on 12 October. The lack of confidence is reflected in substantial losses in the Bank of Mexico's net reserve position. Hospital interns have begun a work stoppage in support of the student strike, and members of the social security agency are planning to demonstrate their sympathy with the students.

ANNEX

Soviet Strategic Attack Forces

NIE 11-8-68 was approved by USIB on 3 October. It estimates the strength and capabilities of Soviet strategic attack forces through mid-1970 and the general trends in those forces over the next ten years. Some of its major conclusions are:

--Current programs will bring further improvements in the Soviet strategic position, already the most favorable of the postwar period, but the Soviets face the complication of projected improvements in US forces.

--In planning their future strategic forces, the Soviets are almost certainly exploring a number of alternatives, including a strategic arms control agreement. If they do not get one, they will try to maintain and if possible improve their relative strategic position.

--The great improvement in the Soviet strategic position results primarily from the rapid and extensive ICBM deployment of the past few years. The Soviet ICBM force now has about 900 operational launchers, with the prospect that it will surpass the US force in numbers by 1970.

--We believe the Soviet ICBM force goal over the next decade will be somewhere between 1,100 and 1,500 ICBM launchers (Air Force and Army estimate between 1,200 and 1,800). Such a force would probably embody significant qualitative improvements, including sophisticated re-entry systems, such as multiple re-entry vehicles, multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles, and probably mobile systems.

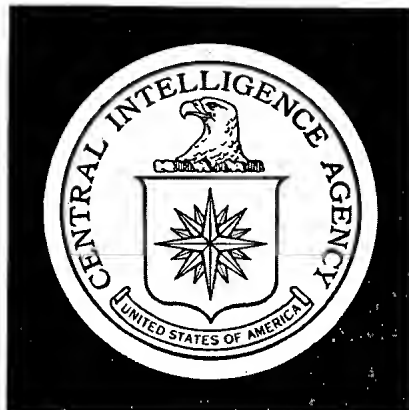
--There has been little change in the size of the MRBM/IRBM force, which still stands at about 700 launchers. New MRBMs and IRBMs will probably supersede present systems within ten years.

--We believe the Soviets are building toward a ballistic missile submarine force that will confront the US with a threat roughly comparable to that which the Polaris force presents the Soviet Union. The Soviets could reach that position by the mid-nineteen seventies.

--Attrition and retirement will gradually reduce the Soviet heavy bomber force. The medium bomber force will probably also decline, but more gradually, and a follow-on medium bomber may be introduced. (Air Force believes this underestimates the role of strategic bombers.)

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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16

5 October 1968

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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

5 October 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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Lebanon Tries to Curb Shipping to North Vietnam:
The Lebanese Government has told the US Embassy that it has imposed fines totaling over \$12,000 on a Lebanese-flag ship which twice this year violated Beirut's ban on voyages to North Vietnam.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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